

MRC REGION IX

THE CONVERSATION

Summer 2006

National Conference Issue

Surgeon General Speech

The Region IX MRC office was diligently going through the documents from the 2006 National Conference and decided this may be the best way of distributing the information. The 2006 National Medical Reserve Corps Conference was a great success thanks to all of you for your participation. Dallas was a little warm when we arrived but the weather cooled down and the night walks to dinner became more and more adventurous.

Let's talk about the Surgeon General; I never get tired of hearing him speak. This year you could tell that there was overall gratitude emanating from him as he spoke about the MRC and the great accomplishments that were achieved over the last year.

"We are a bigger better nation because of the MRC... There were lives saved and changed because of you." That's just good to hear but even better to feel. The MRC expanded and grew with the needs of our nation's citizens, most without even leaving their own backyards. I'm not quite sure if the program

needed to prove itself but it is definitely now getting recognized. The concept is simple, the message clear, the MRC is a valued asset for a local community, a statewide disaster or a call across the nation. Volunteers rock!

The Surgeon General also talked about back in the days of civil defense and how what seemed like simpler times there was an understanding of personal preparedness and when the sirens roared everyone went scooting under ones' desk for protection. Now as we face an even greater possible threat "pandemic", we need to look back to the past to protect our future by having a sense of personal responsibility. This topic was a great segue into health literacy and health disparities. If we can take away one message from what the Surgeon General has placed before us as his priorities; it's that public health preparedness is everyday. "MRCs have the ability to impact this" A local unit that understands the culture and the community have a better chance of communicating the Surgeon General's priorities to its neighbors. A local



leader is more influential within a community. The MRC could fill a role as "educators".

No small task to undertake but I believe we are up for it. Dr Carmona also handed us back the MRC slogan challenge. We need to think bigger broader and all encompassing when trying to create a slogan. We want a lot said in very few words kind of like the Regional Coordinators take on Commander Tosatto's mantra "It's a local thing"(we got sweatshirts made). And here is Region IX "Volunteers not victims", it seems to have so much more meaning now than before. So let's put our west coast minds together, hire a publicist in L.A. and find the right slogan to match our everyday challenge to create a better community through health.

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All the presentations from the 2006 National MRC

Conference

are now available on the web.

Go there- get them

Go to the [national site](#)

Upcoming Events

Please place all Region IX activities on the

mrcregionix-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

This is an interactive area with a calendar for all of us to use. I have also pasted the pictures from the National Conference on there for you all to steal and post, if you would like.

MRC of the Vegas area will have a meeting on June 6th

San Francisco Citizen Corps meeting June 7th

Arizona Citizen Corps Meeting June 13th

AESA Conference June 14-15th

Sacramento Regional MRC will participate in Delta Breeze on June 17

Points of Light Conference (Seattle) June 18-20th

Sacramento regional Citizen Corps Council will be having a Golf Tournament on June 28th

Northern California Veterinary MRC is planning an exercise for early July

I've been introduced to the core now I'm getting on the train

There was a lot of action and discussion about training, access to training and how to get an already very busy volunteer to sit through NIMS.

The National Program office has answered your questions as best they can without creating requirements for all MRC volunteers. First was the [Core Competencies](#). A generalized list of what every MRC volunteer should know about the MRC and about volunteering. The Core Competencies were released at the National conference and there was a lot of good discussion among Region IX as to

now what?

Then comes the MRC-Train website. We talked a little bit about this back in January and I have to say it seems better than I had imagined. As unit leaders you are in control of what courses your volunteers take and you can track the overall progress of your volunteers. Plus they have access to more advanced courses if the volunteers are interested.

This online tool can only assist in the growth and completion of the core competencies.

Now the tricky part is finding the man hours to track, complete and edu-

cate oneself on how to use the system.

The Train.org people seem very willing to assist in the development of your knowledge base of the website. I will assist in any way that I can.

Lets make it a project of ours to play with these two items and give our opinions about form and function for our next conference call. Stretch the program and see if it seems useful, especially for our retired doctors and nurses.



This is where you find the core competencies

Region IX Breakout

The Region IX breakout session was in full swing with active conversation and lively talk about resource typing. What it is and what it means to a local unit.

This is the challenge that is facing all those who could potentially participate in a disaster using the National Response Plan. It is to identify resources and type them. For us this task is a little more daunting because each MRC has people, not supplies. We as a resource are as different

as peas and carrots, still veggies but go best with much different meals.

So this is how we are going to approach this situation. We divided the room into two groups, those willing to deploy and those wanting to remain a local asset. Each unit leader was given the NIMS Resource typing guidelines and broke into discussion. Some units have already started the process and some people were like NIMS, what is that?

The discussion went on and the homework was set. Take this concept back to your local partners discuss and decide based on the very broad criteria classify your unit's assets. We will then use this broad perspective to come up with a model of different types to be used on a possible statewide scale.

I left out one thing: The due date, here it comes please submit your resource typing draft to the Region IX office by **June 30, 2006.**

**NEXT
CONFERENCE
CALL
REGION IX
June 23rd
AT 3PM pst
Be there
For unit leaders**



Commander Tosatto Wrap-up

To top off everything Commander Tosatto gave us a great wrap-up on the last day with take a ways to think about and also to let you, as a volunteer know, that as requests come to the National Program Office we try and address them. That our partnerships overall are increasing and that the NPO encourages

partnering with the organizations such as The Points of Light Foundation, The American Red Cross and the ESAR-VHP integration project.

Looking into the future, the NPO will continue the workgroups and continue to grow and address sustainability issues as we do. We also want to con-

tinue our local, local, local mentality, yet recognize mobility. Overall encourage the Surgeon General's priorities. Elevate MRC awareness through targeted outreach working with the DHHS public affairs office. Create assessment measures and develop ongoing evaluations.



The Bat Signal

MMRS meeting

At the NDMS conference there was a leadership meeting for the MMRS. I slipped in to the meeting and was able to listen to where they currently are in their operations.

The MMRS has come out with a new Program Administration Handbook. This is a "how to" document for their leaders. It is still in draft form.

They also created a cross walk of the Lessons Learned of Hurricane Katrina and the comments by MMRS. Many of the items on this documents are ones we as a group have already talked about and have

now seen dozens of times.

A good example of this would be #57a

HHS should develop a comprehensive plan to identify, deploy and track federal public health and medical assets (human, fixed and material) for use during a catastrophic event.

MMRS response:MMRS resource management capabilities should be included in this comprehensive plan.

Each item was given an answer by MMRS as to where they stand or how they could

better integrate themselves. It was a great idea, I thought. I only have it in print form currently.

The next Region IX MMRS meeting was held in Arizona on the 31st of last month. I attended this meeting and received great feedback from the MMRS groups in Region IX.

Those interested in more information, please let me know.



NDMS

I attended the National Disaster Medical System conference immediately following the MRC conference. The tone of this conference was "grrr we did it". The reason I bring this up is because there is still a great difference between a DMAT volunteer and an MRC volunteer.

DMATs have a go-go kind of mentality. I have an old coworker who I sat and had a shake with at the conference and we talked about Katrina as all

Disaster geeks do. He was telling me about the deployment, what the DMATs did and where he saw MRC volunteers and wanted to know what we were thinking about for the future.

We agreed that there was a difference between our groups and that that difference allows us great coordination in the future.

Now that being said we also both agreed that the more hands assisting in a disaster the better.

So where do we go from here? We agreed that identifying those willing to deploy and getting them basic courses on what its like in the field is important. If you are willing to be in austere conditions you must understand what that really means and how much training the MRC Auxiliary will need in the future.



Picture

So for those who were in the pictures with the Surgeon General they are available for purchase at www.ibeck.storefrontphotos.com

The password is:
mygroupphotos

Preparedness Month activities

Get on the ball now! Start thinking about how your MRC unit can make a difference in September and every month till then.